



9/11 15-year Anniversary Remarks
Mayor Mike Bodker
Sept. 11, 2016

Thank you to our host, the Johns Creek Rotary, our honored guests and to those who have joined us this afternoon in remembrance of the tragic events that struck our country 15 years ago today. They say that time heals all wounds, but this one we will never forget.

As time has moved forward, we have learned so much about many of those who fell that day. Faces and stories have been connected to names. We've learned about their families, their hopes and dreams, and about the heroics of individuals to act without regard to their own personal safety.

Just recently, CNN aired a story about a number of the children who lost parents on 9/11 that focused on their resilience. The piece, titled "9/11 kids to terrorists: 'You lose'," is a powerful

reminder of the spirit that endures in each of us. It is also a forceful message to those who wish to do us harm that you can never defeat what you can never understand.

The spirit of those who perished 15 years ago lives on through their children and in the lives of all those they touched. The next generation will pass that spirit along to the one that follows, and it will survive long after our enemies are defeated. And make no mistake, we will win.

As newer and stronger buildings rose from the ashes so did the lives of those left behind. As we gather each year to remember the events of 9/11, the stories of those we lost and the resilience of those who carry on should inspire us all to live each day better than the last.

Our gathering today, the fact that you made the decision to join with strangers to pause and remember, is another example of our enduring spirit and our ability to move forward in the face of adversity with strength, unity, and purpose.

As the old English proverb goes, “sorrow remembered, sweetens present joy.” CNN’s piece on the “9/11 kids,” while very well

done, only scratches the surface of this sentiment. I can't help but to be encouraged and excited when thinking of the great achievements to come, and how these young people are inspired to move forward and make a positive difference in all that they do.

We have so much to celebrate and so much for which to be thankful. I can think of no more powerful reminder of what we have to look forward to than what has brought us together today. Our strength and will as a nation was put to the test and it was not broken. Not even close. Wherever you gather or stop to remember on this day each year, it should also serve as an opportunity to celebrate our strength.

The international criminals who attacked our nation on this day 15 years ago grossly miscalculated the end result because they do not truly understand what sets us apart.

We never quit. We never give up. We never stop moving forward. Whenever we are down, we take a moment to gather ourselves. We look around, we come together, and we harness the collective spirit that lives inside each and everyone one of us to press on and grow stronger.

And as we gather each year on this day to remember, we do so not out of anger or hate. We gather to remember those who perished, to recognize our resilience and strength, and to send a clear message to those who represent evil, that they lost the day they attacked us. Those who carried out this criminal act failed to recognize that while you may be able to take away a life, you can never take away a spirit.

I stand with you today and every day celebrating our perseverance, our will and our common goal to keep our nation the greatest on earth. While we may falter, we will never fail.

May God bless those that serve our city each and every day and for those that have joined us today and may God continue to bless the United States of America.